



CAPTAIN GEORGE'S
Penny Dreadful

TORONTO, JUNE 24, 1977

NUMBER 435

1953

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**2nd
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OPENS DAILY 10 45 a.m.
COOL **Loews UPTOWN**
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BARBARA
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"The Moonlighter"

Extra
JOE McDOAKS
COMEDY
"DO YOU THINK
YOU CAN'T SING"
BUGS BUNNY
DUCK, RABBIT DUCK

TIVOLI AT BOTH THEATRES **CAPITOL**
RICHMOND AT VICTORIA YONGE AT CASTLEFIELD

TIVOLI-12.15-2.05-4.00-5.55-7.45-9.40 CAPITOL-2.00-3.45-5.40-7.35-9.25

A WEEKLY REVIEW

A Letter fro

One of you Whizzbangers up there in the Great Northern Wilderness has recently done me a great and much appreciated favor, and a disservice, too, at one and the same time.

Many Penny Dreadfuls ago, I wrote to comment on some remarks Pete (I think it was) Harris had made about the old Golden Amazon novels John Russell Fearn used to write, and to correct some of the information he gave, which was a trifle off. I concluded with an unsubtle hint that, if anybody up there in Whizzbangerland wanted to do Lin Carter a favor for any reason, I would love to have one of Fearn's old Star Weekly novels, none of which I had ever seen.

Not too much later, some Kindly Soul shipped off to me the Star Weekly Complete Novel for August 27, 1955, containing Fearn's novel "Parasite Planet." I devoured it with gusto and enjoyed myself hugely. Thanks, friendly Whizzbanger, whoever you are --

And that's my gripe! The kind-hearted Canuck didn't put his name on the envelope, so I have no idea to whom I am indebted for this swell gift. Authors can pay back favors and Kind Deeds in a unique manner, you know, by Dedicating Novels to good people. But how can I dedicate a book to some lug who remained anonymous?

Some news and notes, and a query: If anybody up there happens to be fond of my three Kenneth-Robesonish thrillers about Zarkon, Lord of the Unknown--"The Nemesis of Evil," "Invisible Death" and "The Volcano Ogre"--all from Doubleday--you'll be happy to learn that I have signed a contract to do a fourth in the series, called "The Earth-Shaker."

It will be dedicated to Edmond Hamilton, the creator of Captain Future. But the dedication will be shared: and it will also read, "and to Captain George and all my friends in the Vast Whizzbang Organization." (That's for you, Anonymous!)

And now for a news update: yes, Virginia, we will soon have some real Sword and Sorcery in the movies. To be precise--for them as likes--Thongor. Milton Subotsky, who didn't exactly lose money on his two recent (and not at all bad) Burroughs flix, "The Land That Time Forgot" and "At the Earth's Core," has at last picked up his option on three movies about my Lemurian swashbuckler-cum-Barbarian.

The last time I had lunch with Subotsky, we discussed casting. He wanted to get Christopher Lee to play Yelim Pelorvis the Yellow Druid,

CAPTAIN GEORGE'S PENNY DREADFUL, a weekly review established in 1968, is published by the Vast Whizzbang Organization at Memory Lane, 594 Markham Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

m Lin Carter

and hoped to sign Sir Ralph Richardson for the part of Sharajsha the White Wizard. Thongor himself remains uncast, but for the part of Princess Sumia I suggested that if he could find a luscious seventeen-year-old Chinese girl who looked like a teen-aged Nancy Kwan, she'd be perfect for the part. (And if he can find a luscious seventeen-year-old Chinese girl who looks like a teen-aged Nancy Kwan, I want her phone number! (cackle * shriek * snort!).

Jim Danforth is doing the monster animation effects, and already has some sketches underway, which I saw at Tucson last month, when I was there for the SF-Fantasy-Horror World Expo. Danforth, maybe you remember, animated the film "When Dinosaurs Rule the Earth."

So the first three of my Lemurian books are going to be movies.

There will also be a Conan movie, as you perhaps already know. I will have a lot less to do with that, of course, than with the Thongors: but it looks as if it's Sword and Sorcery time at last in Glitterville.

Other news, for those who may be interested. The seventh of my ERBian novels about Jandar of Callisto (and Friends) is due out soon from Dell. The title was originally "Jungle Maid of Callisto" --hi, out there, all you Tarzan fans! -- but the Messrs. Dell, for their own Inscrutable Reasons, decided to change it to "Ylana of Callisto" and now, of course, all the anti-Carterian reviewers will accuse me of a sleazy attempt to rip off Burroughs' "Llana of Gathol." (*Sigh*) I am three-quarters done with the eighth in this series, which I have titled "Hidden Valley of Callisto." But only Crom knows what Dell will decide to retitl it...

And a question: quite some number of Penny Dreadfuls back, one of your Esteemed Columnists mentioned the name of the town where Vic and Sade lived, in the wonderful old radio comedy show of that name. I seem to have misfiled my copy of that issue, so, can anybody tell me what the town was called? And the source of the data? And does anybody out there in Whizzbangerland have any of the original Vic and Sade scripts? I would gleefully pay xeroxing costs and postage for copies of same. (Editor's note: Vic and Sade lived in Crooper, Illinois, and a number of the show's scripts were reprinted in a 1972 McGraw-Hill hardcover called The Small House Halfway Up In The Next Block.)

Incidentally, I plan to be in Toronto next April to attend the annual Dorsai meeting, at which I am possibly going to receive an honorary commission as Colonel of Dorsai. Cap'n George, is there any chance of my coming over and spending an evening with you and some of the local Whizzbangers? The beer is on me.

Happy Magic to One's friends up there in the Great Northern Wilderness.

PETE HARRIS

LEARNING THE LINGO: Heaven only knows who the first writer was who tried to capture authentic-sounding dialogue on paper (or a stone tablet, for that matter). Whoever it was--and whenever--writers have been trying ever since to transform into the printed word the sundry ways that people carry on conversations. One of the most notable was, of course, Mark Twain who, in *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, attempted to recreate the various dialects encountered along the Mississippi in the mid-19th century. And, Charles Dickens seems to have had an ear for the various idioms of 19th century English society, high and low. In the 1930s and 40s, Damon Runyon wrote an argot that wasn't so much a re-creation as it was a model to be aped by ensuing generations of hoods and would-be hoods. Ring Lardner caught the conversational flavor of ballplayers with rural and small-town backgrounds. Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler both had a flair for the nuances of lowlife lingo.

The secret of putting the spoken word into print would seem to be selectivity. There is nothing more tiring to read than non-stop idiomatic English, and, for the most part, it's best for writers to use mangled spellings (wuz, sez, etc) as sparingly as possible and let the syntax, or sentence structure, impart the nature of the character doin' the talkin'. Which brings us to Peter Cheyney and his Lemmy Caution novels. Or at least one of his Lemmy Caution novels.

I first became aware of the character as the protagonist of Jean-Luc Godard's 1965 film *Alphaville*, starring Eddie Constantine. And, Steinbrunner and Penzler's *Encyclopedia of Mystery & Detection* mentions the character under the entry for Cheyney. But, I had never read any of the Lemmy Caution books until quite recently when, in my neighborhood second-hand store, I picked up a copy of Cheyney's *Poison Ivy* for a cool 75 cents. Originally published in '37 (the edition I found was a '53 reprint), *Poison Ivy* must have seemed like the real thing in the 1930s to mystery readers in England who, no doubt, were deliciously thrilled to be given a glimpse of the American underworld.

With all due respect to British writers, let it be said here and now that over the decades, few have been able to find the handle on American as she is spoke. Everybody from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to Ian Fleming has tried and most have failed. They fail, for the most part, because they don't listen or pay attention to the real thing. Among other things, they throw in "I reckon" for "I guess" as in "I guess I better scram outa here." But, none of them was wider of the mark than Peter Cheyney in *Poison Ivy*. The book is written in the first person (Lemmy Caution speaking) and, as his first and foremost mistake, Cheyney has Caution (ostensibly a U.S. federal agent) talking like a comic book hood, dropping the "d" from absolutely every "and", and generally fracturing the language. There is one unintentionally hilarious moment (or intentional for all I know) when Caution spots the femme fatale of the piece and proceeds to set her up as the ultimate in regal feminine sex appeal. Whereupon she speaks. It's as if Norma Shearer suddenly started talking like Iris Adrian.